(e) the date of allocation and implementation status of bridge at Jaladia Suti by BRO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. NH-52 in Assam has been entrusted to Border Roads Organisation (BRO) *vide* Government of India Notification dated 16.8.2001. The State PWD, however, has not yet handed over the National Highway to BRO. The decision to entrust the road to BRO was taken as the State Government was not able to utilize the allocation of funds for maintenance and development of National Highway effectively.

(c) There are 22 ongoing improvement works on NH-52. The total sanctioned cost of these works is Rs. 38.12 crore and an expenditure of Rs. 11.70 crore has been incurred upto September, 2001. Some of the works are going on for last 6 to 7 years. The present outstanding liabilities of Plan works to the contractors is Rs. 3.45 crore.

NH works are executed by the State PWD on agency basis. The record of State PWD employees is not maintained by the Ministry. Fate of the employees is to be decided by Government of Assam.

(d) Four laning of NH-52 is not envisaged at present. However, the BRO has been advised to prepare plan for improvement of the NH.

The development and maintenance of National Highway is a continuing process and it is difficult to indicate the date for completion of development.

(e) Construction of Jalakia Suti bridge was sanctioned in November, 1998. The progress upto October, 2001 is 56.48%. The work is likely to be completed by March, 2002.

Rise in unemployment

*250. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has admitted rise in unemployment after the economic reforms were launched;

(b) whether the employment growth rate slipped during 1993-94 to 1999-2000 in comparison to earlier decade (1983-84 to 1993-94) and if so, to what extent;

(c) whether the incidence of unemployment among youths (15-29 age group) is also rising and if so, to what extent; and

(d) what steps-programmes Government are likely to take-launch to create more employment opportunities?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Estimates of employment and unemployment are obtained through National Sample Surveys carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) from time to time. According to these survey results, the incidence of unemployment [as per Usual Principal and subsidiary Status Approach (UPSS)] has increased from 1.90% in 1993-94 to 2.23% in 1999-2000.

(b) The rate of growth of employment during 1993-94 to 1999-2000 was estimated to be 0.98% per annum compared to 2.04% per annum auring 1983 to 1993-94.

(c) The incidence of unemployment among youth (age group 15-29) has increased from 4.6% in 1993-94 to 5.4% in 1999-2000.

(d) The Approach to the Tenth Five Year Plan has recognized the importance of providing -gainful high quality employment to the additions to the labour force and it is listed as one of the monitorable objectives for the Tenth Plan and beyond. The growth strategy of Tenth Plan would lay emphasis on rapid growth of those sectors which are most likely to create high quality employment opportunities and deal with the policy constraints which discourage growth of employment. Particular attention will be paid to the policy environment influencing a wide range of economic activities which have a large employment potential. These include sectors such as construction, real estate and housing, transport, Small Scale Industry (SSI), modern retailing, Information Technology (IT) enabled services and a range of other new services which need to be promoted through supportive policies. Emphasis will also be laid on tourism to ensure realization of full potential of this activity.

Employment Strategy in the Tenth Plan will focus on employment growth and on the qualitative aspects of employment. In order to enable the poor to access the opportunities and to ensure consistency between the requirement and availability of skills, emphasis will also be placed on skill development.

Loan for Modernisation of National Highways

*251. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the new loan the country got from the Asian Development Bank to modernise National Highways System; and

(b) the Highways to be developed with that loan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI): (a) A US $ 240 million loan has been approved by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 20.9.2001 to the Government of India for Western Transport Corridor Tumkur-Haveri NH-4 Project. The loan repayment period is 25 years including a grace period of 5 years.

(b) The proceeds of the loan will be utilised for rehabilitation and upgradation of the existing NH-4 between Tumkur (km 75.0) and Haveri (Km 340.0) excluding Sirra bypass (km. 116 to 122) in the State of Karnataka.

Introduction of German Passport Writing Machine

*252. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that German made Passport writing machines would be introduced in the Regional Passport Office, Hyderabad;